

Under 5 CANS: The BASICS

Developed for use on Under 5 CANS Learning Community Call

Date: September 13, 2017 from 10:00-11:00



What Can the Under 5 CANS do?

- The Under 5 CANS is a tool that providers use to gather information during their assessment process.
- The Under 5 CANS focuses on strengths as well as needs of the client and caregiver.
 - Strengths are areas of the child's life where he or she is doing well or has an interest or ability.
 - Needs are areas where the child requires help or serious intervention.
- The Under 5 CANS is designed to be used for decision support and outcomes management. Its primary purpose is to allow a system to remain focused on the shared vision of serving children and families. It operates on the philosophy that providers and systems can focus on the best interests of children and families served if care managers have accurate information about the needs and strengths of the children in the system.

How did the Under 5 CANS come about?

- Nearly three years ago a CANS Implementation workgroup began meeting to think through how we measure outcomes using an IFS approach and answer the question of "Are children, youth and families better off?"
- After focusing on a variety of tools the group decided on the CANS which was developed by John Lyons, Ph.D. The tool creates a way for teams to put information in one place that is gathered during the assessment of a child and family to create a clear way of creating a focus on what strengths can be leveraged that already exist and what the needs are.
- After completing an official Vermont version of the CANS for ages 5-22 a special subgroup of the Implementation Team which included members of the early childhood community, AHS departments, and stakeholders came together to create an official CANS for children under 5.

How is the Under CANS being implemented in Vermont?

- The CANS Implementation workgroup previously mentioned meets once a month and has created the official CANS tool, organized training opportunities, and continues to think through additional implementation steps.
- If you are interested in being more involved in CANS implementation please reach out to Cheryle.Bilodeau@vermont.gov, Interagency Planning Director, Department of Mental Health.

Who is using the Under 5 CANS in Vermont?

- There are several Designated Agencies and Parent Child Centers who have begun either using the Under 5 CANS or exploring how they can implement it in their agency.
- The Under 5 CANS is not a state mandated tool, however, agencies are seeing the value of its use and many programs are using the CANS 5-22 and want to be able to compare data across age groups.

How can I be sure when I give out an Under 5 CANS report that it is clear what the intention is behind it and how the information was gathered?

- On the IFS website you can find a word document with the following CANS Disclaimer that can be added to CANS reports given to teams that states the following: *The Vermont CANS is an information integration tool, intended to include multiple sources of information (e.g., youth and family, referral source, treatment providers, school, and observation of the rater). The CANS report is designed to be the output of this assessment process, serving to represent the shared vision of the child/youth serving system.*

Where can I find resources on the Vermont CANS?

Here's what you can find on the IFS website about the CANS: www.ifs.vermont.gov

- Official Under 5 CANS Manual
- Official Under 5 CANS Scoresheet
- A Family Guide to the CANS
- Frequently Asked Questions about Training and Certification
- Vermont CANS Web Training and Exam Tips
- How to Navigate the CANS Training Website
- John Lyons CANS Training ppt, May 2016
- Disclaimer to include on CANS Reports
- How to Implement the CANS at your agency